CAMP WHITE
GRENADE II

"Preserving the Past for the Future"

VOLUME 5, NO. 1 THE NEWSLETTER OF THE CAMP WHITE HISTORICAL ASSOCIATION MARCH 2000

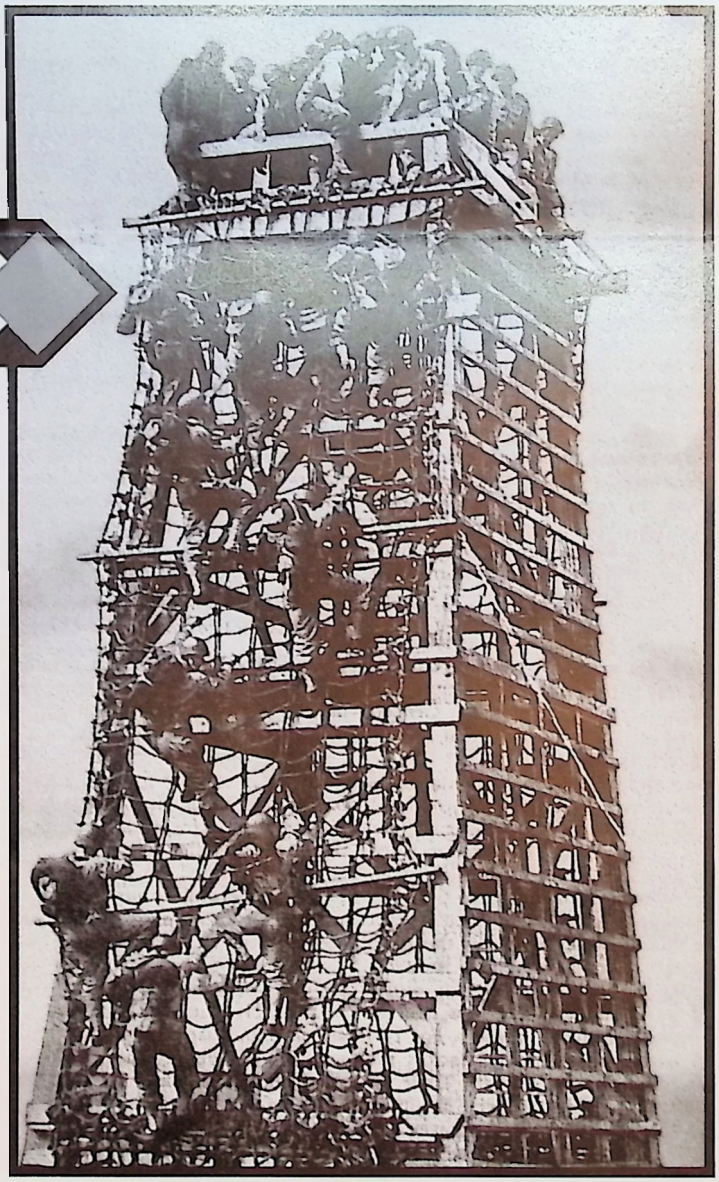
THE 96TH DIVISION

"Killed in Victory... Reborn in Calamity"

The 96th Division of World War II was a far cry from the 96th of World War I. It was initially organized in September of 1918 and demobilized January 7, 1919. It was one of the last three divisions ordered into existence before Armistice Day as one of the extra units that was hoped to force the Germans to capitulate.

In 1923, it was again reactivated and served as a reserve organization for units from Oregon and Washington. By December 6, 1941, the division was about as dead as an organization could be as the country, in it's anticipation of war, called its members to active duty.

On August 15, 1942, the division which had been "...killed in victory..." would be "...reborn in calamity." In a small ceremony at Camp Adair, Oregon, Major General James L. Bradley, USMA class of 1914, officially incorporated the unit into the war time Army of the United States.



As was any new division, the 96th had not been selected for a particular theater of war. Initial training consisted of exercises in and around Camp Adair. In May of 1943, the Division was sent to Ft. Lewis, Washington. Camp Adair was giving at the seams as the 104th Infantry Division had recently been activated at the same Post. In September the Division along with the 104th and 91st participated in maneuvers in Eastern Oregon. At the conclusion, the 96th was sent to Camp White, which would be the longest continual duty station for the Division since it left Camp Adair.

(continued on back)

Left: Part of amphibious training included the simulation of debarking from a ship by going over the rail and down the cargo nets.

COMMANDER'S CORNER

Al Inlow

Dear friends and fellow members:

Looks like another year ahead as commander for me. To allow me to better serve you, I am asking that you send your interesting military stories to the museum address.

And on another note: Our Italian friend and member, Fernando Germignani, is looking for a Harley Davidson motorcycle made before 1970, Military or civilian. If you know of one, please contact: Fernando Germignani, Via Costantino Nigra-2, 50136; Firenze, F1, Italy.

Until next time,

Al Inlow

AL INLOW, COMMANDER
Camp White Historical Association and Museum

THE GRENADE II

The *Grenade II* is the official newsletter of the Camp White Historical Association and Museum.

Executive Editor ..... Al Inlow
Managing Editor ..... Sherry Wachter
Printed by ..... Minuteman Press

The Grenade *accepts suggestions and contributions from readers. If you have a story idea or appropriate event to promote, write Al Inlow at P.O. Box 2373, White City, OR 97503.*

CAMP SUPPORT

Military posts consist of two primary elements; the combat personnel and those who comprise the support services. At Camp White, the most visible of the support services was that of the Women's Army Corps, "WACs." The second most visible were the Army Nurses Corp

The WACs and nurses completed the same training as other support personnel; having to traverse the infiltration course, learn to don their gas masks and march.

Camp White Army Nurse personnel were part of the U.S. Army Nurse Corps which had been established by Congress on February 2, 1901. At that time, there were 202 nurses on active duty. By 1917, when the United States entered World War I, there were 403 active duty nurses.

When World War II began, the 7,000 active duty nurses would soon be part of a 57,000 member Corps stationed throughout the world.

Although WACs were stationed all over the post, the nurses worked primarily at what is now the Veteran's Domiciliary. They were quartered in buildings, some of which remain standing today, located south and west of the hospital.

Many of the nurses who served at Camp White were transferred to both the European and Pacific Theaters. At the conclusion of the war, a few remained as the Camp White Hospital was first transferred to the Navy, then the Veterans' Administration.

WHITE SERVICES

FIRST EMPLOYEE
Carolyn Sharrock

Carolyn Sharrock, Camp White Military Museum's first employee, retired on January 29, 2000. A long-time employee of the Southern Oregon Historical Society, Carolyn became a part of the team at Camp White Military Museum in February, 1998. From then until she retired, she divided her time between the Southern Oregon Historical Society (SOHS)—15 hrs/week—and the Camp White Military Museum (CWHA) —25 hrs/week.

Carolyn and her son moved to the Portland area in 1965, then relocated to Medford in 1981. Over the next several years she spent short periods of time in Drain and Eugene, and returned to the Rogue Valley to stay in 1986.

Carolyn went to work for SOHS in March of 1986. She started out as a "work experience" employee through the Job Council. She was hired at the conclusion of her training period, and went on to oversee the Beekman Living History Program, where she was a greeter, then portrayed Mr. Beekman's niece Corrine Lynn, interpreting the kitchen and cooking on the wood stove. She also compiled a bus tour and walking tour of Jacksonville--and gave many tours of both over the years.

In 1989 when the SOHS offices moved to Medford Carolyn was appointed Jacksonville site manager to oversee the facilities there. She held that position until a reorganization in 1993. Since moving to the History Center, Carolyn has helped in the membership department, on the switchboard, and on occasion, in the History Store in the Rogue Valley Mall.

During Carolyn's two years with CWHA she established a regular office routine to keep the necessary statistics, served as book keeper and general office manager, scheduled volunteers, created a volunteer manual, coordinated the first Volunteer Recognition Picnic, produced promotional materials, compiled handbooks for the Board of Trustees, and helped coordinate the production of The Grenade II (which she plans to continue doing in her retirement).

THE 96TH DIVISION *(continued)*

The 96th then became a "hot" division and at Camp White it was brought up to full strength. In the spring of 1944, the 96th became an amphibious division, thus the Camp was reorganized to train the unit in landing operations. Personnel from the Navy and Marines, specialized in the science of amphibious warfare, were assigned to the post.

Late in April the Division was sent to Camp San Luis Obispo and San Diego to finalize its amphibious training. By October, the 96th would be assigned to General Douglas MacArthur and serve as one of the first units to land at Leyte in his return to the Philippines.

The 96th would participate in other campaigns which would conclude with the last great battle of World War II in the rubble of Medeera, Okinawa. This was the culmination of eight months of combat in which the citizen-soldiers of the United States Armed Forces would prove to be a lethal and effective fighting force.

TAPS

Allen Welts, passed away in August, 1999. A former serviceman, he "loved his country and his term serving his beloved America," as his wife puts it. The Welts' contributions to the Camp White Military Museum include the large Norman Rockwell prints that hang along the ramp leading up to the museum proper.

A LITTLE TRIVIA:

Elsie S. Ott, a U.S. Army Nurse Corps second lieutenant, was the first woman to receive the Air Medal for a medical evacuation flight from India to Washington, D.C., executed between January 17 and 23, 1943. The medal was awarded on March 26, 1943.

The attack on Pearl Harbor on December 7, 1941, was witnessed by the following notables:

- Edgar Rice Burroughs: *author*
- Webley Edwards: *radio announcer*
- Leif Ericson: *Hollywood actor*
- James Jones: *author*
- Jason Robards, Jr.: *Hollywood actor*
- Jackie Robinson: *athlete (as a civilian)*
- Robert Trumbull: *newspaper reporter*
- Carl "Bobo" Olson: *Future Middleweight Champion of the world (Bobo was eleven years old at the time)*
- Dave Guard: *Original member of the Kingston Trio (Guard was seven years old at the time)*

—from *World War II: 4,139 Strange and Fascinating Facts*

CAMP WHITE HISTORICAL ASSOCIATION & MUSEUM
P.O. BOX 2373, WHITE CITY, OREGON 97503

MEDFORD OR 975
PM
22 FEB
2000

ALWAYS USE ZIP C

33 USA

Eagle Point Historical Society
PO Box 201
Eagle Point, OR 97524

97524=0201